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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3896
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEPGDA/USEUCOM JIC VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RUFGSHD/USNMR SHAPE BE PRIORITY
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 1613
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEHNO/USDELMC BRUSSELS BE PRIORITY

UNCLAS VILNIUS 000618

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL NATO LH

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT APPROVES AFGHANISTAN MANDATE THROUGH 2013

REF: A. VILNIUS 594

1B. VILNIUS 462

1C. VILNIUS 457

Lithuania's Parliament (Seimas) voted today in favor of extending Lithuania's mandate for its PRT and Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan through 2013. The resolution received strong support with 73 MPs voting in favor, 8 against and 15 abstaining. No single party voted against the measure. The GOL has maintained its' Afghanistan mission as a top priority despite severe economic pressure, with a likely 15-20 percent decline in GDP and the 2009 defense budget slashed by 19 percent compared to the previous year.

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